

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NATO 08493

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UR, CA, NATO, PLOS
SUBJECT: SOVIET ICE ISLAND IN THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

REF: NATO 8033 DTG 231633Z AUG 77

1. AT THE SEPT 6 POLADS MEETING, THE CANADIAN REP
CIRCULATED THE FOLLOWING PAPER CONTAINING A RESPONSE
PROVIDED BY THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN OTTAWA TO THE
CANADIANS ON SOVIET ACTIVITIES ON THE ICE ISLAND, AND
A CANADIAN ASSESSMENT OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE.

2. BEGIN TEXT:
TEXT OF SOVIET NOTE OF AUGUST 30, 1977

"THE SOVIET SCIENTIFIC STATION "NORTH POLE-22" (NP-22)
STARTED ITS WORK ON SEPTEMBER 13, 1972 IN A POINT WITH THE
COORDINATES OF 76 DEGREES 16 MINUTES NORTHERN LATITUDE AND
168 DEGREES 31 MINUTES WESTERN LONGITUDE. IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE PROGRAMME FOR THE DURATION OF ALL THE PERIOD OF
THE DRIFT THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT
AT THE STATION: METEOROLOGICAL, AEROLOGICAL, ACTINOMETRIC,
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OCEANOLOGICAL, REOMETRICAstronomical AND MAGNITILOGICAL.

THUS, THE PROGRAMME INCLUDES THE COMPLEX OF HYDROMETEORO-
LOGICAL AND OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH, ACCEPTED AT THE SOVIET
DRIFT STATIONS AND AIMED AT FURTHER STUDY OF THE HYDRO-
METEOROLOGICAL REGIME OF THE ARCTIC, AND DOES NOT INCLUDE
TYPES OF ACTIVITIES REGULATED BY THE CANADIAN LEGISLATION.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DRIFT THE NP-22 WAS ADVANCING INTO THE NORTH POLE AREA BUT LATER IT WAS DRAWN INTO ANTI-CYCLONAL DRIFT AND IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1976 IT STARTED TO APPROACH THE SHORES OF CANADA. SUCH A PROTRACTED PERIOD OF THE DRIFT AND ITS TRAJECTORY ARE UNIQUE AND THEREFORE THE RESULTS OF THIS DRAFT HAVE A PARTICULAR SCIENTIFIC VALUE. AT THE SAME TIME ONE WOULD WISH TO STRESS THAT THE AEROMETEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE STATION GOES INTO THE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE SYSTEM AND IS RECEIVED BY CANADA.

IN MARCH 1977 THE STATION WAS VISITED BY THE CBC FILM CREW WHICH GOT ACQUAINTED WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, CARRIED OUT BY THE SOVIET SCIENTISTS. AFTER THIS VISIT A FILM ON THE WORK OF THE STATION WAS SHOWN ON THE CANADIAN TELEVISION.

AT THE SAME TIME ONE WOULD LIKE TO NOTE THAT DUE TO THE SPONTANEITY OF THE DRIFT OF POLAR STATIONS THE NP-22 ACCIDENTLY APPROACHED THE 200 MILE ZONE. MOREOVER, SHORTLY THE STATION WOULD APPARENTLY LEAVE THE LIMITS OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED ZONE AS THE CIRCULATING CURRENTS IN THIS ARCTIC AREA WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SHIFT OF THE ICE MASSIF IN THE DIRECTION FROM THE CANADIAN SHORES. IN THIS CONNECTION WE WOULD LIKE TO HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA WILL CONFIDENTIAL

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REGARD WITH UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION THAT AROSE IN CONNECTION WITH THE DRIFT OF THE SOVIET RESEARCH STATION NP-22."

CANADIAN ASSESSMENT OF NOTE

THE CANADIAN ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE IT THAT IT IS AS FORTHCOMING AS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED AND CARRIES IMPLICIT RECOGNITION OF CANADIAN JURISDICTION IN THE ARCTIC 200 MILE ZONE AND POTENTIAL APPLICATION OF CANADIAN LAWS TO THE ICE ISLAND. THE REPLY ALSO CONSTITUTES THE FIRST FORMAL SOVIET DESCRIPTION IN WRITING OF THEIR ACTIVITIES ON THE ISLAND. ON THE BASIS OF THE FAIRLY SUBMISSIVE RESPONSE, AND UNLESS THERE ARE FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS, I.E., CONTINUED PRESENCE IN THE 200 MILE ZONE OR FURTHER DRIFT TOWARD CANADIAN LAND AND PUBLIC/MEDIA PRESSURE, WE PROPOSE TO LEAVE THE MATTER IN ABEYANCE FOR THE TIME BEING, WHILE CONTINUING TO MONITOR THE PROGRESS AND NATURE OF ACTIVITIES OF NP-22.

THE VIEW OF THE CANADIAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES IS THAT THE ICE ISLAND DOES NOT AT PRESENT REPRESENT A MILITARY CONCERN FOR CANADA.

END TEXT. BENNETT

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